Proposed Noxious Growths and Undesirable Trees

I Purpose

To provide guidance for compliance with and enforcement of Section 12.08.040 and 12.12.080.B.1. of the Takoma Park Code. The intent of Section 12.08.040 is to protect residents from allergenic plants and protect manmade structures and the urban forest from damage from the overgrowth of invasive plant species. The intent of Section 12.12.080.B.1. is to promote the health of the urban forest by facilitating the removal and replacement of undesirable trees with trees that will make a valuable addition to the urban forest.

II Directions for Control of Noxious Growth

a. Section 12.08.040 of the *Takoma Park Code* governs the maintenance of noxious plant species on private property.

1. Section 12.08.040.A. prohibits the maintenance of the following species, which may be harmful to human health: poison ivy (*Rhus radicans* or *Toxicodendron radicans*), poison oak *(Rhus toxicodendron* or *Toxicodendron quercifolium*), poison sumac (*Rhus vernix* or *Toxicodendron vernix*), ragweed (*Ambrosia artemisiifolia*) or similar vegetation.

2. Section 12.08.040.B. requires control of the growth of the following invasive plant species: bamboo, kudzu-vine (*Pueraria lobata*), non-native honeysuckle, wisteria, multi flora rose (*Rosa multiflora*) or other vines or vegetation that may damage trees, native vegetation, or structures.

3. Section 12.08.040.C. prohibits property owners from allowing noxious growths from spreading to an adjoining property over the objection of the adjoining property owner.

b. *General mechanical and chemical removal and control.* The University of Maryland Cooperative Extension Service has several quality publications that deal with the control of invasive and nuisance species. Two that are of particular help on this subject are “Invasive Plant Control in Maryland” and “Poison Ivy”. These publications can be obtained on

the Maryland Cooperative Extension Home & Garden web site, http://www.hgic.umd.edu. The following are some general methods of plant removal and control that may also be used for any of the aforementioned species except bamboo.

1. *Mechanical.* Hand pulling or mechanical root and stump removal can be used to physically remove the noxious growth. The entire plant must be removed, both above and below ground. This can be done any time of year, but the ideal time to conduct this procedure is in the spring or fall when soil is moist and rootstalks are easily removed. For noxious growths that can cause rashes, it is important to protect the skin at all times when handling the plants.

2. *Chemical (foliar).* Use a non-selective herbicide (such as glyphosphate) concentrated in accordance with the manufacturer's directions. Apply to noxious growths after the leaves are fully developed. This is often late summer or early fall. Applications after the leaves have begun to turn color should be avoided. Spray plants with herbicide until all leaves and stems are glistening. Do not cause runoff. Re-treat when new sprouting leaves are fully expanded.

c. *Bamboo removal and control*. The University of Maryland Cooperative Extension Service has a quality publication that deals with the control of bamboo. It is simply titled "Bamboo" and can be obtained on the Maryland Cooperative Extension Home & Garden web site, http://www.hgic.umd.edu. The following are some general methods of bamboo removal and control that may also be used as well.

1. *Removal*.

A. *Mechanical*. Cut entire grove of bamboo down to the ground. Water and fertilize the area to cause new growth. New shoots will come up from the underground stems (rhizomes). Break them off or cut them off with pruning shears. Repeat the process until the bamboo ceases to come up. This will eventually exhaust the energy stored in the rhizomes underground and kill the plant. Patience and diligence is needed. It may take a few years to fully kill the plant.

B. *Mechanical and chemical*. Cut the entire grove of bamboo to the

ground. Allow the new growth to emerge and develop leaves during the summer. In October spray the mature foliage with a non-selective herbicide (such as glyphosphate). Repeat application after 14 days. Repeat the sequence every year if you find any residual living bamboo.

2. *Control*. Property owners must not allow bamboo to grow within six feet of their property line, measured at ground level, without the consent of the adjoining property owner. To prevent a running type of bamboo from spreading, a barrier is essential. A barrier must be at least 2 feet deep and be slanted slightly outward at the top so that when the rhizomes hit the barrier they will bend upwards. Note: A barrier does not stop a running bamboo root (rhizome); it only deflects it. The barrier should project an inch above ground level and if any rhizomes arch over the top, cut them. Barriers can be any non-corroding impenetrable material such as concrete, some metals, or plastic. The nursery industry (particularly the part that deals with bamboo) has plastic barrier products that are often referred to as "root barriers" or "rhizome barriers".

III. Undesirable Species

a. The City Manager or his or her designee shall grant a tree permit authorizing the removal of a tree of an undesirable species if the specific tree is deemed undesirable because of its location, condition, or effect on other trees, and the permit applicant agrees to replace the tree with a species approved by the City Manager or his or her designee. Replacement is mandatory, so as to help maintain and maximize City tree canopy cover. Such tree permits shall not be subject to appeal.

b. The following tree species are undesirable for purposes of Section 12.12.080.B.1. of the *Takoma Park Code*:

1. White Mulberry *(Morus alba)*
2. Red Mulberry *(Morus rubra)*
3. Mimosa *(Albizia julibrissin)*
4. Box elder *(Acer negundo)*
5. Ailanthus or Tree-of-heaven *(Ailanthus altissima)*
6. Bradford pear *(Pyrus calleryana* 'Bradford')
7. Ginkgo or Maiden hair tree *(Ginkgo biloba)* female only

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8. Russian Olive *(Elaeagnus angustifolia)*
9. Autumn Olive *(Elaeagnus umbellata)*
10. Norway maple *(Acer platanoides)*

c. The City Manager or his or her designee will consider the following characteristics of a tree, as well as any other relevant information, when determining whether it is undesirable because of its location, condition, or effect on other trees:

1. Location

- proximity to a structure (e.g., house or out building)
- proximity to hard scape (e.g., sidewalk, patio, or retaining wall)
- location in fence-row or growth into fence
- location resulting in debris from tree littering patios, decks, walkways, driveways, or sidewalks

2. Condition

- Poor structure
- Weak branch attachments
- Weak wood

3. Effect on other trees

- Crowding of desirable trees
- Easy propagation affecting regeneration of other species

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